

## VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: January 15, 2019

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Road, Westminster

**Veteran's Advisory Council Mission Statement:** To evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Carroll County.

**Veteran's Advisory Council Vision Statement:** That Carroll County offers our Veterans quality services and programs to ensure the enrichment and enhancements of life for our men and women and their families.

**Council Present:** Larry Burbank, Jack Curran, Elaine May-Stem, Bill Murphy, Bill Nash, Mick Schmidt, John Veney (DLLR Representative), Lisa Watkins (CTS – Ex-Officio)

**County Staff Present:** Rosemarie Glowack, Francine Hahn, Christine Kay, Mike Messina, Stacey Nash, Celene Steckel, Gina Valentine, Leslie Wagner, Shannan Zepp

**Other Present:** Jerry Bowers, Ed Cramer, Bob Eney, Gil Muse, Gary Saylor, Gary Scarbeau, Jason Sidock, Joe Watts, Charles Wheatley, Tom Williams

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Chair's Comments (Larry Burbank) – Larry opened the meeting with a welcome. Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves.
- b. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elaine May-Stem.
- c. Commissioner's Report (Commissioner Weaver) – No report.

### 2. Old Business

- a. A quorum was established with 7 voting and 1 ex-officio members present.
- b. Approval of Minutes (Larry Burbank) – Draft minutes from the December meeting were presented. Bill Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Elaine May-Stem. All were in favor and the December 2018 meeting minutes were approved.
- c. Monthly Program Reports (Veteran Services Staff) – Brief written summary and monthly numbers served.
  - i. Veteran's Program Coordinators' Reports (Francine Hahn) – December 2018:
    1. 21 new representations
    2. 51 claims submitted
    3. 11 home visits
    4. 51 in-office contacts
    5. 343 telephone contacts
      - a. There is a sharp change from previous months to December. MDVa asked that just telephone contacts be reported. Previously, this number represented all contacts including correspondence and email. Next month we will report the telephone contacts just to MDVa, as they requested, but provide all contacts to VAC as we have done previously.
  6. Return on investment, based on known awards: approximately \$552,757.18 for compensation and pension (monthly); approximately \$12,524,528.30 since inception of the program (October 2013)
  7. Veteran Directed Care Program approximately \$74,477.00

8. Francine Hahn reported that length of time for case decisions has increased; Pension 3-4 months and Disability 4-6 months. Their goal is have each claim fully developed, with all information completed prior to submitting. This deep intake process allows them to spot issues before the VA so the claim is not initially rejected, taking longer to process and be approved. The pension regulation changes in October 2018 allow for a more lengthy documentation with a 3 year look back period, also creating a longer time in receiving approval.
- ii. Veteran's Shuttle Report (Lisa Watkins) – December 2018:
  1. 24 veterans were served, with 3 in wheelchair and 14 home pick-ups
    - a. Baltimore – 14 veterans – 51 trips
    - b. Fort Detrick – 3 veterans – 3 trips
    - c. Fort Meade – 1 veteran – 1 trip
    - d. Martinsburg (one way – 1 hour and 40 minutes) – 6 veterans – 6 trips
  2. Total Cost = \$5,775.00
  3. Decrease in December was due to the holidays.
- iii. Employment Initiatives for Veterans Update (John Veney) – It has been slow since the beginning of the year. He is working with Veterans to get registered, as well as job ready by reviewing interviewing skills and updating resumes. BERK has Job Boards so any Veteran can visit and choose. Fairs and Job Clubs are upcoming.
- d. Update on Veteran Direct Home and Community Based Services Program Grant (Gina Valentine) – This program is funded by the VA and provides personal care for Veterans to remain in the community. Each county has the capacity to provide services to a maximum of 5 Veterans. We currently have 4 Veterans, with the 5<sup>th</sup> Veteran's application being processed. This program is run through Maryland Department of Aging and their Fiscal Intermediary is changing and the contact is leaving. So there is a period of transition ongoing.
- e. Update on Veteran Services Program Grant (Shannan Zepp) – Currently, 3 Veterans are receiving assistance with emergency housing, with no permanent housing as of yet. Four have been diverted from homelessness and many have received assistance with bus tickets, food cards, furniture, electric bills, and care repairs.
  - i. With the 10 HUD-VASH vouchers Carroll County was awarded, nine have been approved and one is in the application process. Due to attrition, we will have three more available soon.
- f. Update on Veteran Friendly Business initiative (Todd Mitchell) – No update.
- g. Update on Carroll County Veterans Independence Project – CCVIP (Ed Cramer): There will be a Board Meeting on Friday, January 18, 2019 at 6pm at the Non-Profit Center and a Fundraising Committee Meeting on Monday, February 18, 2019 at 6:30pm at the Non-Profit Center. Anyone can attend these meetings. The Muscle Club is looking to do one or two car shows in 2019, possibly at the CCVIP property, with proceeds benefiting CCVIP. The Chamber of Commerce will be having a PM Connections networking event for CCVIP on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Free for Veterans is a new organization in Carroll County and run by Brian Dell. They store excess furniture and provide to Veterans who are in need.
- h. Update on Friends of Disabled American Veterans in Carroll County (Bill Murphy) – Bill thanked the many individuals, companies, and agencies that have supported the start of their non-profit. In December they had 8 Veteran transports. In addition, they are assisting a homeless Veteran with transportation; building a wheel chair ramp with assistance from Wesley Freedom United Methodist Church, doing plumbing repairs and installing a stair lift for an 84 year old

Veteran; developing a Veterans program with Mission of Mercy in Taneytown; working with The Buddy Project in Frederick that supplies computers and printers to Veterans; as well as donating a scooter to a Veteran in need. The program is still looking to supply an AED for their van, hire an assistant grant writer and an administrative assistant. Bill will be scheduling a speaking tour throughout the county to get the word out and provide whatever assistance Veterans need.

### 3. New Business

- a. Closed Meeting Update – Gina Valentine informed the group that in a closed meeting December 18, 2018, the council voted to recommend to the Commissioners that a member who had not attended a meeting since 2017 be removed. The recommendation has been provided to the Commissioners.
- b. Establishment of an Executive Committee – It was discussed whether or not to establish an Executive Committee that would meet and focus on the goals of the VAC and the needs of Carroll County Veterans. Bill Nash made a motion to create an Executive Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair and two additional council members. Elaine May-Stem seconded and everyone voted to establish an Executive Committee with those four members.
- c. Discussion about frequency of meetings – tabled for the Executive Committee to address.
- d. Presentation to the Board of County Commissioners – At last month’s meeting Larry, Elaine and Marc Fisher agreed to create a power point presentation on the history of the VAC and their vision moving forward. This would take place sometime end of February.
- e. The County will not be pursuing trademarking the VAC logo. Bob Eney motioned that the VAC keep their logo as is and Bill Murphy second. All were in favor.
- f. Announcements
  - i. The Veterans Shuttle will be making a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners this Thursday, January 17 at 1pm. This can be viewed online or Channel 24.
  - ii. The DAV will be having their mid-winter conference next month and will be meeting with legislators to discuss issues that affect Veterans.
  - iii. VFW Post #467 will be removing wreaths from Deer Park Cemetery on January 19<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9am.
  - iv. Consider volunteering for Carroll Hospice. Their volunteer course is 20 hours.
  - v. There is a national non-profit that assists disabled American Veterans with fly-fishing.
  - vi. Home Depot is assisting VFW Post #467 with renovating their wheel chair ramp and deck with \$10,000 in gift certificates.
  - vii. Wesley Freedom United Methodist has received a grant to install wheel chair ramps. Bill Murphy will be meeting with them to discuss.

4. Next Meeting: February 19, 2019 at 2pm at VFW Post #467, 519 Poole Rd, Westminster.